

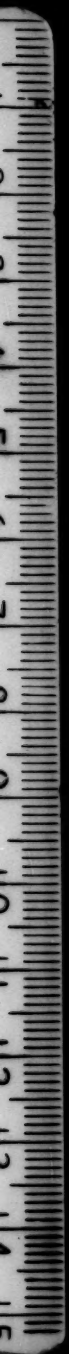
A
L E T T E R

ADDRESSED TO

DR. HAWKESWORTH.

[Price Sixpence.]

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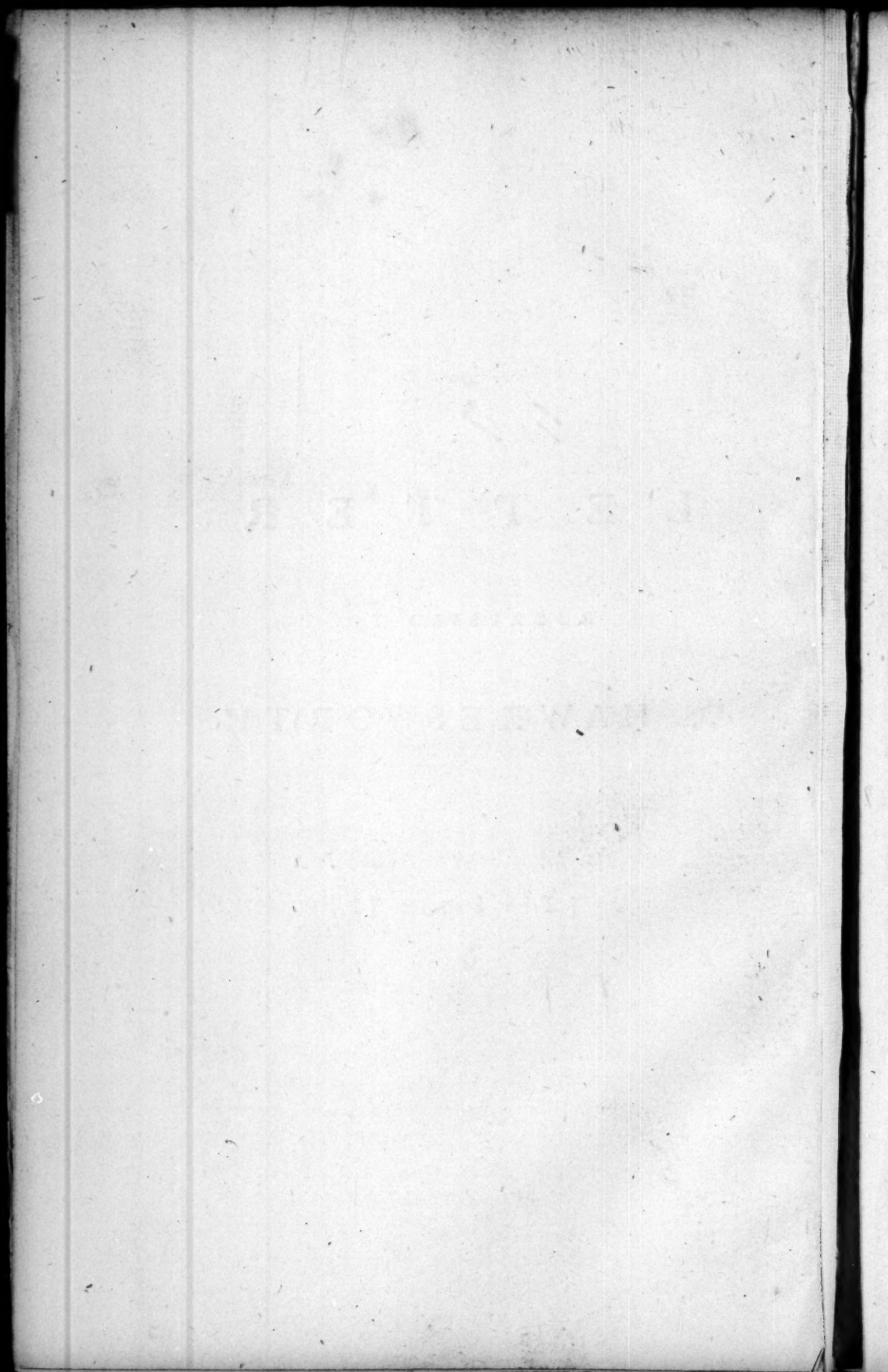


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And humbly recommended to the Perusal of

THE VERY LEARNED DEISTS.



L O N D O N,

Printed for T. PAYNE, near the Mews-Gate.

MDCCLXXIII.

LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

DR. HAWKES WORTH

And being transmitted to the Editor of

THE VERIFIED NEWS

R67310

LONDON

Printed by T. Paine, at the Press of

MCCLENNAN

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A

LETTER

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S I R,

HAVING entertained an high opinion of the goodness of your heart, and of your abilities as a polite scholar, from the many moral papers written by your pen in the *Adventurer*, I promised myself much instruction and entertainment from your account of the voyages of our late circumnavigators; and from the observations you would have an opportunity of making on

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their adventures, and on the manners of a newly discovered people ; though I could not but be sensible, that your little acquaintance with philosophical knowledge, left us no room to expect much solid information from any use you could make of materials of that kind.

But I was both disappointed, and incensed, to find, that in the only path where you could have done good, you have chosen to do mischief ; and have made use of this opportunity, only to trifle on the one hand, and to spread poison on the other.

I could have been content, Sir, even to have read through three large Quarto Volumes without gaining any important information ; and should only have silently thought, it was pity Dr. Hawkesworth should *so* lose his literary fame, and the esteem of mankind : but when I perceive that, forgetting all your fine moral lessons,

sons, you endeavour to hurt the minds of those who have not abilities to see through the sophistry of your arguments ; and to divest those young minds who may read your book for entertainment, of the first principles of religion, I cannot but think you deserve rebuke from every one who is able to set pen to paper.

Time was, when you would have told us, by means of some Eastern tale, *that it was glorious to confide in the Gods, in our distress; and thankfully to remember their benefits* : but now you think fit to tell us, *that it is beneath a wise man, to look upon any deliverance from danger as the effect of God's providential care* : and this you affirm, only for this silly reason, because God might have prevented the danger from happening ; and you impudently add, in support of your opinion, a citation from the book of Job, whilst you are denying that, which it is the

purport of the Scriptures, from one end to the other, to prove.

The words of Job are, *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?* but, Sir, there is a passage, which you might have hit upon, had you been *very* conversant with the Scriptures, much stronger than that you have chosen; and it is in Isaiah's Prophecy, ch. xlv. ver. 7. *I form light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.*—Yet, Sir, because God, with infinite wisdom, not only permits, but inflicts evil; to which we ought to submit with patience and resignation, to the utmost of our power, tho' we cannot but feel it as men; are we, therefore, when in mercy it pleases Him to bestow good, to refuse to be thankful, or to acknowledge the blessing?—Ought we not rather to say, that as the common evils of life are to be received as our common lot, appointed for wise purposes; and

and the common good things of life, as the instances of God's universal care, and love for all his creatures: so, very remarkable, and extraordinary evils, are to be considered as instances of his Providence interposing to chastise us in mercy, or to awaken and inform us; and very remarkable deliverances, and blessings, are to be considered as instances of the same Providence, interposing to convince us of his goodness and mercy? —And as the former should lead us to repent, and to search our hearts; so the latter should lead us to rejoice, and be thankful; and to know, *that God is indeed our God.*

It is, I allow, true, and agreeable to scripture, that we are not to consider Almighty God as a Partial Being, or a Respector of Persons: but if you can conceive a general Providence, which can exist otherwise than by a care of, and attention to every individual creature, it is
more

more than I can; especially since our Lord Christ himself told us, *that not a sparrow falls to the ground, without our heavenly Father's knowledge; and that the very hairs of our head are all numbered.* And if you will suppose God *so* to rule by general, and not by partial laws, as to imagine that he has set the whole machine, both of the material and spiritual world, a-going, and then left it to itself, as a watchmaker does a watch; you make just such a being of God, as the Epicureans did; and take away all foundations of hope and fear, and, in short, all the foundations both of natural and revealed religion: and you do, besides, in the application of such an illustration, forget that the watch does sometimes want both to be wound up, and to be repaired.

As to the instance you have hit upon, in order to take occasion of disclaiming all allowance of the interposition of God's
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Providence, you could not have been more unlucky in your choice.

The Endeavour had sailed more than thirteen hundred miles, upon a coast most uncommonly dangerous; insomuch that the very description of it is sufficient to make any experienced navigator tremble; and yet they had met with no bad accident: when yet, by the captain's own acknowledgement, if they had struck upon any rock, they must have perished; because there was no fresh water to be procured, nor a proper place, with proper necessities, for repairing the ship, even if they had got off again. But at last they did strike, and were in a situation that made all on board look upon death and destruction as unavoidable: yet *directly* they had a perfect calm; whereas there almost always blows, in that part of the coast, a strong sea-breeze; by means of this calm they got the ship off; and, almost immediately after they were

removed from the rock, it blew again, and they soon found the best and most convenient harbour that could be, to re-fit; to which they were carried by a gale, which, had it blown at all sooner, would certainly have beaten them to pieces. So that the ship struck, and they were brought into this evil and danger, only at a place and time when instant and most wonderful deliverance was at hand. But this was not all: for when they arrived in the harbour, and came to examine the ship, they discovered, that notwithstanding the sudden and surprising dying away of the gale of wind, just at the critical moment, and the calm that ensued, yet they must inevitably have perished, had it not been for a piece of rock, which in a most astonishing manner stuck in the leak, and by means of which the wool and oakham took effect. Yet you, Dr. Hawkesworth, though you declare there was but a lock of wool between them and destruction,

tell

tell us, all this was no ground for thanksgiving.—A young man on board the ship, however, who wanted the advantage of your education, thought not so:—and you may rely on what I am now going to relate as a certain fact.—There was amongst the crew, an idle, thoughtless lad, who having given much pain to his friends, was sent to sea; and went thither apparently without any religious principle whatever:—but this poor youth was so affected, both by the danger, and by the deliverance, that he became quite changed in his disposition; and afterwards wrote home an account of the effect this event had upon his mind, which shewed him to be *then*, all that his friends could wish: and soon after writing that letter, and in that state of mind, he died. Now, Sir, if you must have an account of the reason of all God's ways, though it becomes not man to ask such questions, yet in the instance you have unluckily hit upon, by way of

illustration of your principles, it happens, that *one* reason may be assigned for such a remarkable interposition of God's Providence; though there may have been, and most probably were, many more, and greater, to us unknown.—The conversion of this young man from an evil to a good disposition, was surely, *alone*, no contemptible cause why such an adventure happened to the ship; especially if we believe, as our Saviour hath told us, *that there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth*; and if we remember the words of St. Paul, *that God will have mercy, on whom he will have mercy*.

And, Sir, there is no occasion for supposing (as you put the case) either that what happened was a mere natural event, as you are pleased to call it; and by which, I suppose, you mean one with which God had nothing to do; or to imagine, that the deliverance was a correcting a *defect in the constitution of nature*.

ture. The evil was no doubt wisely appointed, and inflicted, by the over-ruling Providence of God : and the deliverance as wisely wrought, in mercy, by the same Providence : and neither the one or the other ought to be forgotten, or considered in any other light. And you would have done well, before you attempted to put what you thought so puzzling a dilemma to us, to have proved, that there either is any mere natural event, with which God has nothing to do ; or that there is any defect in the constitution of nature.

It is indeed both weak and injudicious, and a dishonouring of God, to be calling out, on every trifling occasion, *what a Providence it was !* and nothing can be more contemptible than Richardson's making Pamela say, (as in effect he does in one place) *that she thanks God for giving her grace to behave well in good company.*—Whether he meant to scoff at religion, (which I can hardly suspect him of),

of), or whether he thought it was right to preserve the consistency of a girlish character, at the expence of giving occasion to others to scoff, is at present no concern of mine; for either way he was to blame: but though, from such an instance, the absurdity of impertinent and improper thanksgivings does to be sure fully appear; yet it is no less absurd, but still more so, and even very wicked, for that reason to refuse, on proper and *obvious* occasions, to offer up any thanksgivings at all.

Common and general blessings, and advantages, are proper subjects for general thanksgivings; and particular and extraordinary blessings, and deliverances, are also proper subjects for particular and extraordinary thanksgivings, and for due acknowledgements of the interposition of God's providential care and goodness.

But,

But, Sir, before I end this letter, I must add a few words more to you.—I observe in your book, Vol. II. p. 307, where you give an account of the escape of Tayeto, poor Tupia's boy, from the New Zealanders, that you inform us, he was so struck with a sense of his danger and deliverance, that he immediately brought to Tupia a fish, to offer to his Eatua, or god, as an acknowledgment ; and that he accordingly cast it into the sea as a sacrifice : but you do not, Sir, inform us, that any one soul, on board the ship, took hold of so fair an opportunity, to give either Tupia, or his boy, the least instruction ; tho' these poor blind human beings were at that time able to converse both with the officers and crew, and had given them much useful information and assistance in their navigating the ship through an unknown sea.—What ?—Was there not one Christian on board, to instruct them in the truth ; or to desire to lead them out of darkness into light ?—nor one moral

philosopher, with *benevolence* enough in his mind, to desire to bring them out of their error, and to make them more rational beings?—I have heard much of the *benevolence* of rational deists, and enlightened philosophers : but if this was really the case, their behaviour, on this occasion, was, nevertheless, a reproach to their country ; and late as the discovery of these hitherto unknown regions is made, it is made even now too soon.

Our fire-arms, indeed, at present, give us an advantage over these brave uncultivated savages ; and we vainly triumph in it:—but if we forbear to endeavour to instruct them by degrees, and to form good principles in their minds, which would be a better means of defence for us than all our fire-arms, it is not impossible, but that the nations both of the East, and of the West, and of the South, may some time or other learn not only the use of our weapons but, (skilful as they

they already are) our art of navigation too; and treat us hereafter, as the Northern nations did the Roman empire, and the first Christians, when they had taught them the art of war, as then known, and had at the same time themselves departed from the knowledge and fear of God.

Sir, I understand you have received above six thousand pounds, for the compilation of the materials put into your hands, which I think can never have been so barren, as you make them appear to have been; and to which there was no need of your adding injurious observations and opinions.—Observations, and opinions, which seem to be entirely your own.—For, if we may judge from what you could neither alter nor suppress, that is from the names given to places, the commander and officers of the ship had very different apprehensions from yours, about their wonderful escapes

capes and deliverances, when on one occasion (mentioned from p. 605 to p. 608.) having been saved in a manner beyond their utmost hopes and expectations, they thought fit to call the passage between the rocks through which they escaped, *Providential Channel*.

So far were they from being ashamed of acknowledging their obligations to their Creator and Preserver: and so much nearer were their sentiments to those of the Royal Psalmist, who tells us:—*They that go down to the sea in ships: and occupy their business in great waters: These men see the works of the Lord: and his wonders in the deep. For at his word the stormy wind ariseth: which lifteth up the waves thereof. They are carried up to the Heaven, and down again to the deep: their soul melteth away because of the trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man: and are at their wits end.*

So

So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble: he delivereth them out of their distress.

For he maketh the storm to cease: so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad because they are at rest: and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness: and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!

Sir, if all the benefit the world is to obtain, in consequence of the materials relating to the voyages having been put into your hands, and entrusted to your publication of them, is only the broaching of such observations and opinions as those you have now favoured us with, I must needs say, I should be glad that even twelve thousand pounds were given, to restore to us the rough materials, in their original unpolished state: and I am persuaded, that the most intelligent part

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of

of your readers, whatever you may think of the matter, will be of the same opinion; and even think, that it is a very grievous evil that you were employed on this occasion; and that a larger sum has been given to you for doing mischief, than was ever yet given to any author in this kingdom for doing good.

But, Sir, even for the permission of this evil, and notwithstanding the mischief you have done, we may perhaps, by and by, have reason to acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of God, and his providential care and attention to the well-being of mankind, though there be no thanks due to you; so far am I from thinking, with you, that we are to acknowledge that Providence on no occasion.—For possibly, ere long, a spirit may be roused by what you have now done, to defend the truth, which otherwise would not have appeared: and the cause of truth may be thereby fixed on
a firmer

a firmer basis, and its influence may extend more wide than it would have done, had it not been for this *weak* attack of yours.

I have only to add, that perhaps you may think, and others may think, that in this little epistle I have ventured to treat you with too much disrespect, and asperity; and that such language does not become one who professes to be a Christian: but, Sir, I have long experienced, with great concern, that professed Deists, and modern philosophers, are not a set of men whom it is possible to treat with humility and deference: for they will only avail themselves of both, to insult and abuse; and they seldom use even the appearance of either, on their part, but as apothecaries do gilding for their pills, to make their sophistry the more easily swallowed. Besides, I cannot help remembering with what asperity our Lord and Saviour (the best ex-

ample we can follow) treated the Pharisees, and with what boldness Stephen reproved the Jews. They have *both* taught us, that sometimes meekness and charity may be carried too far; and that there are occasions when a Christian should exert himself, and not suffer the reproach of a want of spirit, and proper courage, to fall upon the Christian name.

When a set of men, with a little superficial knowledge, pretend to take the lead, with a degree of arrogance and insolence which the modesty of the truly learned hardly knows how to oppose, and which therefore makes them pass for great philosophers, and men of uncommon penetration, in the opinion of the bulk of mankind, whilst, in fact, they are but *blind leaders of the blind*, it is time, even for the meekest Christians to exert themselves, lest by means of their *passive* neglect, those who might otherwise

wise

wise be preserved from error, fall into the
 same ditch with their guides. To all this
 I may also, Sir, add, that the manner in
 which you treat others, even of your
 own false sentiments, will be an excuse
 for this my treatment of you. The edi-
 tor and compiler of Lord Anson's Voy-
 age was but too much in your way of
 thinking, and therefore, one would have
 thought, should have met at least with
 civil treatment from your pen; yet, in
 your first volume, you have taken a great
 deal of pains to discredit his work, and
 the authenticity of it; merely because
 the Island of Tinian is not the same plea-
 sant spot now, that it was when Anson
 was there: whereas, I should have ima-
 gined, you might easily have been aware
 of what cannot escape the observation of
 your readers; namely, that the pains the
 Spaniards have taken to render that place
 a disadvantageous station for any ship that
 might come into those seas hereafter, to
 make another of their galleons, together
 with

with length of time, and mere neglect of cultivation, might easily occasion the difference between the present state of Tinian, and its condition when Anson was there: and, therefore, that there was no necessity for you, either to question Anson's veracity, in this part of his narration, or to fling out insinuations to the disadvantage of the compiler of his voyage; perhaps he may deserve censure on other accounts, but it comes with an ill grace from *your* pen.

Sir, I once had an esteem for you, and a respect for your character; but you cannot expect that I should *now* express any: and therefore, I shall bluntly conclude my Letter, with desiring you to remember in time, (as you do sometimes read the Scriptures, and even venture to cite them) the words of our great Lord and Saviour, *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be*

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ashamed,

ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels. Remember also those words of God, in the Book of Samuel, Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. You will do well, Sir, to consider attentively the import of all these words, notwithstanding your haughty declaration, of having paid your homage to the Supreme Being, consonant to your own ideas of his agency and perfections; for, peradventure, those ideas of yours may not be the most just standard of truth.

P. S. It would not be amiss, Sir, to inform the world, why there is a chasm of above two hundred pages in your book.

F I N I S.

of the world, which is the only one
that is not the work of God, in the Book of
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